



June 15, 2011

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

To The Commission:

Assisting counties with obtaining the proper infrastructure for new and existing businesses is a priority for the East Tennessee Development District—and these days, few types of infrastructure are as important as communications networks. For that reason, we are writing to encourage your approval of the AT&T/T-Mobile merger. Many areas we serve have been waiting for access to state of the art mobile broadband; this problem will be greatly helped if this deal goes through.

This is particularly important for East Tennessee's small businesses, many of which are located in remote areas with a limited market reach. *Small businesses account for 60 percent of all new jobs, and they tend to get a bigger boost from technology than large corporations.* In a way, communications technology functions to emulate many aspects of economies of scale. It goes a long way toward leveling the playing field, allowing them to reach customers, retailers, and suppliers from far away that only large companies could tap into previously.

Furthermore, mobile technology allows a one- or two-person operation to fulfill the duties of several people as entrepreneurs can multitask on the go. A 2008 study revealed that nearly one-third of small businesses with 99 people or fewer rely on smart phones, which is significantly higher than the general public.

Overall, a merger between AT&T and T-Mobile is good for small businesses, consumers, job growth and the economy. That is all the evidence we need to support the deal, and we expect that you will reach much the same conclusion.

Sincerely,

Terrence J. Bobrowski

Executive Director - East Tennessee Development District

CC:

Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn